



ILLINOIS HOMELAND SECURITY UPDATE September 13, 2002

George H. Ryan
GOVERNOR

Matt Bettenhausen
Homeland Security Director

The Illinois Office of Homeland Security and the Illinois Terrorism Task Force recently released a report entitled "Homeland Security in Illinois" at a press conference held with Governor Ryan last week to highlight some of the accomplishments and achievements Illinois has made over the years in terrorism preparedness. If you have received this Update via e-mail, the full report is attached either in Word or Word Perfect form. It is also available on the Internet at www.illinoishomelandsecurity.org. Hard copies can also be obtained by calling the Illinois Emergency Management Agency at (217) 782-2700.

Letters included in the report from both Governor George H. Ryan and Homeland Security Director Matt Bettenhausen are below.

To the People of the Great State of Illinois:

Many of us were caught off guard during the events of September 11, 2001. Not only were these events tragic, but they served as a reminder that no entity is ever safe from terrorist actions. Since those vicious attacks in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania, I have seen our country – and our state – pull together, unlike any time in a generation. We are united in preserving our freedom and democracy. We are united behind our law enforcement officials, our military, and our emergency personnel as they selflessly battle on all fronts to protect our liberty and wipe terrorism and its aftermath from our world.

In Illinois, last September 11th only served as a reminder that the work of the Illinois Terrorism Task Force that I appointed in May of 2000 is even more important than ever before. Since those tragic events, my office, along with the Illinois Terrorism Task Force and other state, federal, and local agencies have worked even harder to prepare this state. This report reviews this hard work and their dedication. We owe much to the men and women of this state and our nation who are asked each and every day to risk their lives to keep our homeland safe and our nation secure.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George H. Ryan".

George H. Ryan
GOVERNOR

To the People of the Great State of Illinois:

Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001, America has come to a better understanding and appreciation of the hardwork and dedication of our first responders. While our police, fire, EMT's, health care professionals, public servants and the men and women serving in our military have always been heroes, sadly we have graphically seen the sacrifices they are willing to make to protect our families, our loved ones, our homes and our way of life. Their dedication and commitment is not something new—they were training, preparing and protecting us long before September 11, 2001.

The same can be said about the State's efforts to prepare for potential terrorist acts, whether committed by foreign or domestic terrorists. Nearly three years ago, Governor Ryan created the first-ever statewide Terrorism Task Force that began examining ways to better protect our critical infrastructure and prepare emergency personnel to respond to the consequences of weapons of mass destruction or other terrorist acts. It is an enormous challenge as the borders of Illinois contain 55,000 square miles, 12.5 million people and vital infrastructure, businesses and industries spread throughout the state. Illinois is a hub for commerce, transportation and research.

The Illinois Office of Homeland Security and the Illinois Terrorism Task Force have been hard at work over the past year strengthening our state's security and bolstering our already strong public safety infrastructure. While much has been accomplished, this report is an attempt to summarize some of the highlights of the planning and preparation efforts that have been ongoing throughout the State. These efforts have been corroborative in every sense of that word. Preparing Illinois requires the cooperation and teamwork of federal, state and local governments and private industry. Much of the success we have achieved in Illinois is because of those partnerships and the spirit of cooperation that has existed here for a long time. Summaries and simple highlights of activities that are of current public interest, of course, can never adequately encompass the blood, sweat and tears so many have contributed to these efforts. Unfailingly, untold hours have been donated by our first responders, government and private industry workers and interested citizens. We (and I especially) owe an enormous debt of gratitude to each and every one of them.

We have also been fortunate that the Governor and the General Assembly have been very committed to building our public safety infrastructure, year-in-year-out, in our state agencies. Over time, we have compiled impressive resources and assets to deal with natural disasters and terrorist acts. Since September 11th, our resources have been fully utilized. Laboratory technicians, police, and firefighters have been working overtime to protect this state and its citizens. We have been able to leverage millions of local, state and federal dollars in the homeland security effort. For example, we have used both federal and state dollars to fully equip inter-agency response teams and HAZMAT teams with the specialized equipment to deal with bio-hazards and weapons of mass destruction. The state's innovative and comprehensive MABAS System makes sure that every community and every citizen is better protected. MABAS provides resources, support and backup to every community in Illinois. Without question, the State of Illinois is far ahead of the curve in its level of preparedness.

However, being prepared is a relative term. No one could have ever imagined the extent of the destruction and the full effects and repercussions from the events that unfolded in New York, at the Pentagon, and in Pennsylvania. Illinois is prepared, but we must continue preparing in earnest as you can never be over-prepared. We have come a long way in learning about terrorist activities, yet at the same time we also have a long way to go in preparing our state for the next unthinkable event.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Governor Ryan for his foresight in thinking about terrorism preparedness at a time when few were willing to face the possibility that this could be a major issue in our lives. Indeed, it is Governor Ryan who created, supported and made possible both the Illinois Office of Homeland Security, as well as one of the nation's first terrorism task forces that has been preparing our state for more than two years now.

I wish to thank the members of the Illinois General Assembly and the Illinois' Congressional delegation for their support and assistance. We are fortunate to have political leaders who know that this effort will require a sustained funding commitment and that the federal government has a responsibility greater than ever to the front-line soldiers of homeland defense—our first responders. I would also like to thank President Bush, Governor Tom Ridge and their Homeland Security staff in Washington, D.C. for working to ensure that the country as a whole is both prepared and protected, and for working so closely with Illinois. Finally, I must thank the members of my staff, state and local agency directors and their staffs, and the members of the Illinois Terrorism Task Force—especially Task Force Chair Mike Chamness, Vice-Chair Doug Brown and all of the committee and subcommittee members—without whom none of these extraordinary accomplishments that are outlined in this document would be possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Matthew R. Bettenhausen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Matthew R. Bettenhausen
Illinois Homeland Security Director

- The Illinois Homeland Security Advisory System announced that the Threat Level Classification has been changed from Yellow (Significant Risk of Terrorist Attacks) to Orange (High Risk of Terrorist Attacks) by the United States Office of Homeland Security as of 12:15 p.m. Central Daylight Time on September 10, 2002, until further notice. The Illinois Emergency Management Agency is recommending that county and local units of government consider implementing the following protective actions from the "County and Municipal Government Guidelines for Implementation of the State of Illinois Homeland Security Advisory System": O (Orange)-1, O-2, O-3, O-7, O-10, O-11, O-15, O-18, O-20, O-22. The Guidelines can be accessed at the IEMA web site www.state.il.us/iema if your unit of government has not yet received a copy. If you have received this Update via e-mail, the guidelines are attached in both Word and Word Perfect forms. In addition, hard copies can be obtained by calling IEMA at (217) 782-2700.
- The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has developed a training program to teach doctors, nurses, and pharmacists across the state how to give the smallpox vaccine. Individuals completing the educational program will be certified by IDPH to instruct others in their location (train-the-trainer format). As part of the curriculum, healthcare professionals will practice on oranges without vaccine, using the bifurcated needles recently procured by IDPH. The training program will help to prepare the state for either an elective or emergency mass vaccination program for smallpox. Additional courses have been set for public health nurses, infection control nurses, pharmacists and infectious disease doctors across the state.

- The IDPH recently completed a six-month project dedicated to providing chemical and biological terrorism preparedness training to approximately 250 environmental health professionals in the state. Staff from the Division of Environmental Health conducted 12 three-hour training sessions which covered the five classes of chemical warfare agents, all of the Category A and B biological agents, personal protective equipment guidelines, environmental sampling protocols, and decontamination recommendations. A demonstration of the personal protective equipment required to make a safe entry into the "Hot Zone" was also given. Representatives from all 94 local health departments, six regional offices, and the central office of the state health department were in attendance.
- The Office of the State Fire Marshal hosted a training and equipment distribution session for the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) hazardous material departments. Over 60 members were in attendance. Each team received approximately \$33,000 worth of chemical, biological, and nuclear detection equipment. This vital equipment permits the first responder to detect if they are battling a biological, chemical or nuclear incident.
- As of September 9, the Illinois Department of Public Health, Springfield and Chicago laboratories have processed 1,863 samples. All have been negative for anthrax.
- Distribution of two free potassium iodide (KI) tablets to each interested resident living or working within the 10-mile Emergency Planning Zones (EPZ) is scheduled at four locations for the Braidwood, Dresden, and LaSalle Stations September 21-22 and at two locations for Byron and Quad Cities Stations on September 28-29.